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TRINITY CHURCH, OXFORD, PHILADELPHIA.¹

BY GEORGE HARRISON FISHER.

In 1885 the Reverend Dr. Buchanan published "Two Discourses relating to the Early History of Trinity Church, Oxford, Philadelphia, with a Compend of its History between 1854 and 1882." This is an excellent piece of work, and it might be supposed to make my present attempt superfluous. I am impressed with Dr. Buchanan's thoroughness as I examine his authorities, but the audience which I have the honor to address differs from his audiences, and a varied use of the materials and varied emphasis may not be out of place. The letters I quote are almost all to be found in Bishop Perry's great work, "Historical Collections relating to the American Colonial Church."

The first Episcopal church in this State—Christ Church, Philadelphia—was founded in 1695. In 1702 George Keith, the first missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, returned to America, and was here a little over two years. His journal of travels forms his report to the Society, published in 1706. In it he says,—

"In Pennsylvania where there was but one Church of England congregation settled, to wit at Philadelphia (and even that of but few years standing) at our arrival there, there are now, Blessed be God, five Church of England Congregations, supplied with ministers, and who have convenient Churches, where the people assemble constantly, every Lord's Day, to the prayers and sermons, and where the Holy Sacraments are duly administered according to the Church of England. The places in Pennsylvania where these churches are set up are, the first *Philadelphia*, the second *Chester Upland*, the third *Francfort* alias *Oxford*, the fourth *New Castle*, the fifth *Apoquimene* . . . the place at Francfort . . . where the congregation assembles on the Lord's Day is called Trinity Chapel, it was formerly a Quaker Meeting House, built

¹ An address delivered before the Colonial Dames of America on May 11, 1903, in the parish building.

or fitted by Quakers, but some time ago it has been given to the Church by such as had the right to it. Some land adjoining was given by a person well affected to the Church, for the use of the Minister who should reside there, for a house, garden and small orchard."

From these extracts it will be observed that Keith, who had lived in Philadelphia from 1689 to 1694, who, no doubt, corresponded with his numerous followers here between 1694 and 1702, and must have been well informed as to what was going on here in the interests of religion, asserts that only after his return in 1702 was there a settled Church of England congregation at Oxford. Yet there can be little doubt that services were held here before 1702. In 1707 the Reverend Evan Evans, who was minister to Christ Church, with some interruptions, from 1700 to 1718, writes to the same Society,—

"Trinity Church in Oxford township, lies in the County of Philadelphia nine miles from the City, where for the first four years after my arrival in Philadelphia I frequently preached and administered both the Sacraments, and had, when I last preached in it, 140 people, most of the people brought over to the Church of England from Quakers, Anabaptists, and other persuasions."

Hence Dr. Buchanan infers that the beginning of the parish dates from 1698, or earlier, because he thinks Mr. Evans speaks as if he had found a church and congregation here in 1700, and the only Church clergyman who is known to have been in Pennsylvania before 1700 was the first minister of Christ Church, the Reverend Mr. Clayton, who died in 1698. But, with deference to Dr. Buchanan, I suggest that, even if we must conclude that church services were held here before the time of Evans, of which there is no direct evidence, they may have been conducted at any time after 1697 by Mr. Rudman, the Swedish missionary, who was afterwards regularly employed here.

At all events, in spite of Keith's language, and in spite of a clearly inaccurate statement to be found in Watson's *Annals* (vol. ii. p. 73, edition of 1844), we may regard

the year 1700 as the latest possible date of the formation of the parish, because Mr. Evans's direct testimony is confirmed by a deed, among the title papers of the church, dated December 30, 1700, from Thomas Graves to Joshua Carpenter and John Moore, for three acres of ground now embraced in the graveyard and the lot adjoining, in trust, for the "Use and service of those of the Communion of our Holy mother, the Church of England, and to no other use or uses whatsoever." By Joshua Carpenter Keith was entertained on his missionary visits to Philadelphia, and Keith speaks of preaching twice at Oxford.

It may seem strange that it cannot be stated in exactly what year the original place of worship was built, and when, precisely, the building passed under the control of churchmen, whether in 1700 or a few years earlier; but the obscurity of the first five years of Christ Church is almost as deep. We must remember that, throughout nearly the whole of the colonial period, the Anglican churches in Pennsylvania were missions. A charter was granted to the United Churches of Christ Church and St. Peter's Church in 1765, but the charter for incorporating the United Episcopal Churches of Trinity Church in Oxford Township, All Saints Church in Lower Dublin Township, Philadelphia County, and St. Thomas's Church in White Marsh Township, Montgomery County, was not granted by the Legislature of the State of Pennsylvania till 1787. These missions were voluntary associations, not recognized by the law. They could hold no property. Property designed for them had to be conveyed to trustees for their use. The members of the congregations elected vestrymen and wardens, but the association, as such, could neither sue nor be sued, enjoy any rights nor incur any obligations. The vestrymen often petitioned the Bishop of London to license such and such a clergyman for the care of their parish, and the person so licensed was nominally responsible to the Bishop of London, who, as a rule, knew little about him. It can, then, be understood that these informal associations of per-

sons desiring to worship according to the Anglican doctrine and discipline in many cases attracted little public attention. There were no charters to be recorded; minutes were kept carelessly or not at all, because the occasions of their necessity must have been few.

Until the Revolution most of the churches in Pennsylvania received aid, generally £60 a year, from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, chartered in 1701, and to-day aiding missionaries and chaplains in every quarter of the globe. The deep obligations of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States to the Venerable Society (as it was styled from the first) are generally acknowledged; but there are two men who should be remembered by all who study the history of that Church in Pennsylvania. These men were Henry Compton, Bishop of London from 1675 to 1713, and George Keith, whose journal I have quoted. In 1675 Bishop Compton found that in the American Colonies, exclusive of Virginia and Maryland, where the Church of England was established by law, there were scarcely four ministers of the Church of England, "and not above one or two of them, at most, regularly sent over." He prevailed upon King Charles II. to make an allowance of £20 to every missionary whom he should send out, and he is known to have been the author of Section 22 of the charter given to Penn, Proprietary and Governor of the Province of Pennsylvania, March 4, 1681. This section provides,—

"That if any of the inhabitants of the said province to the number of twenty, shall at any time hereafter be desirous, and shall by any writing, or by any person deputed by them, signify their desire to the Bishop of London, for the time being that any preacher or preachers to be approved by the said Bishop may be sent unto them for their instruction, that then such preacher or preachers shall and may reside within the said province, without any denial or molestation, whatsoever."

And it is pleasant to note that Penn's relations with the Bishop were friendly. In a letter to the Lords of Plantations, dated Philadelphia, 14th of 6th month, 1683, Penn

wrote, "I have followed the Bishop of London's counsel by buying and not taking away the natives' lands." Yet the Bishop had begun life as a soldier. In 1700 he sent Evans to Philadelphia; in 1701 took an active part in the organization of the Society, and was always a friend of American missions. And George Keith should neither be forgotten nor rated as he has been rated by most American writers. Proud, the historian of Pennsylvania, wrote of him seventy-five years after the events: "his conduct was so glaringly inconsistent with his former pretensions, and his behaviour towards the Quakers so manifestly arising from a malignant disposition of mind and disappointed malice, notwithstanding all his superior abilities which he possessed and made use of, he was universally despised by sober and thinking people of all Societies." Keith was no doubt heartily disliked by the Quakers from whom he separated, and Proud gives us the opinion handed down through two or three generations of Quakers, the tradition, as it seems to me, becoming legendary. And I think this traditional estimate of Keith has been adopted by writers, such as Bancroft, without consideration and without justice.

Keith was born in 1639, near Aberdeen, where he was educated and became a good classical and mathematical scholar. He was brought up a Presbyterian, and became a Quaker in 1662. He was then twenty-three. Between that time and 1684, when he came to New York, he wandered about Scotland, England, and the Continent, and was imprisoned five or six times, sometimes for months together, for preaching his religion. In 1689 he became the first principal of the Friends' public school in Philadelphia, which later received a charter from Penn, and still flourishes; but he held this place only about a year, and in 1691 denied some of the Quaker doctrines. It would be impossible for me even to sketch the religious controversy that arose, or to attempt to write the history of the schism which soon occurred among the Quakers. It is enough to say that many turned away with Keith from the old Society of

Friends, and some of the Keithians went to the Church of England and some to the Baptists and Presbyterians. Keith went back to England. In 1700 he took orders in the Church. In 1702, as I have stated, he came to America as one of the first pair of missionaries for the new-formed Society, and travelled hard in mission work for more than two years. His companion was the Reverend John Talbot, afterwards settled at Burlington. His journal, to which I have referred, gives me the impression of a particularly zealous and sincere man; I have never heard his statements of facts questioned, and there can be no question that his labors greatly increased the number of adherents to the English Church. His history in Europe, as a Quaker, proves his undaunted courage; his abandonment of the chief doctrines of Quakerism, in Philadelphia, resulted, as he must have expected, in the loss of his place and prospects. When he took English orders he was sixty-one, and yet he was eager to endure the hardships of a missionary journey to America in the interest of what he then regarded as the purest form of religion. The following extract from his journal may help us to see, however, that his society might be unpleasant :

“August 30th, 1702.—As we were crossing the Ferry at Portsmouth on Rhode Island, by the good Providence of God we escaped a great danger . . . our mast and sail were beat down by the wind . . . for some time we remained there much tossed by the waves . . . and were in danger to be driven out to sea and overwhelmed. . . . But a Quaker of my former acquaintance whose name is John Burden . . . came with all speed in his boat to relieve us, and towed us to land. . . . I offered money to his men but he would not permit them to receive any. I thanked him very kindly for his help in our great danger and said to him, *John* ye have been a means under God to save our natural life, suffer me, under God, to be a means to save your soul, by good information to bring you out of your dangerous errors. He replied, *George*, save thy own soul, I have no need of thy help; then said I, I will pray for your conversion; he replied, the prayers of the wicked are an abomination. So uncharitable was he in his opinion concerning me, as they generally are concerning all who differ from them.”

More than once on this journey he made an uproar in Quaker meetings by rising and denouncing what he believed to be their errors. Such behavior could not have added to his influence, probably increased the bitterness with which he was regarded by many of his old friends, and did lasting injury to the reputation of a remarkable man, who did his duty as he saw it, and who accomplished important results in spite of his want of suavity and tact. He lived till 1716. I have only to add that Proud's statement, that on his death-bed he regretted that he had left the Quakers, is unsupported by authority and seems out of keeping with his strong and courageous character.

But to return to this parish. Dr. Buchanan thinks that the first building was of logs. Mr. Evans, of Christ Church, and his assistant, Mr. Thomas, officiated here as they had time, and Mr. Andrew Rudman, minister of the Swedish Church of Gloria Dei, was the first person regularly employed here. Missionaries of the Swedish Lutheran Church often officiated in the Anglican churches of the Province without English orders, and were recognized and remunerated by the Venerable Society in England. In 1711 was built the oldest part of the present church edifice,—it would seem about thirty-six feet of the west end of the nave. According to Accrelius ("History of New Sweden," English translation, 1874), Messrs. Björk and Sandel, Swedish missionaries, took part with the English clergy at the opening services in 1713. These, because there was no Bishop, had to take the place of a consecration; and for the same reason no church in colonial days received regular consecration. It is worthy of remark that when Christ Church was rebuilding, in 1711, the Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia was offered to the congregation for some Sundays; but the offer was declined, the congregation preferring to ask for the use of Gloria Dei Church, which was granted to them for the desired number of Sundays. Afterwards, in 1794, when another Lutheran church was destroyed by fire, the vestry of Christ Church

offered their building to the unfortunate congregation at such hours on Sundays as could conveniently be arranged.

Mr. Evans, the minister of Christ Church, went back to England for a time, in 1707; Mr. Rudman took his place, and the Reverend John Clubb, master of the school connected with Christ Church, who had already often officiated, "in pity to our forlorn condition, did piously take upon him the care of our poor church." So wrote the vestry of this church on March 5, 1709, to the Venerable Society, and they begged for the appointment of Mr. Clubb as their regular missionary. He seems to have been beloved by his people, and among all his successors there seems to have been not one really unworthy man. Few colonial churches, I believe, could say so much. There was no American bishop until after the Revolution, at least no one who performed episcopal acts. The Bishop of London, who at first assumed the right to license clergymen for America,—which right was afterwards confirmed by the King in Council,—was sometimes deceived by clerical adventurers who were leaving their country for their country's good. He, more excusably, made mistakes about certain colonials who went back for orders, but who were morally unfit for the calling. Many promising persons who would have taken orders were deterred by the great expense involved in the journey to England and by the perils of the sea, at the present day so little considered. Down to 1767, fifty-two young men had sailed from America to be ordained in England, and forty-two returned in safety. It is noticeable that in 1702 Keith came here in a ship-of-war and returned in another in 1704. During the long wars of the Spanish Succession, the Austrian Succession, and the Seven Years' War the most peaceful travelers had to fear the violence of enemies, both on men-of-war and on privateers.

The good Mr. Clubb seems to have been here for the last three or four years before the church was rebuilt. In 1711 an address of the clergy of Pennsylvania stated that his

salary from the parish did not exceed £30, out of which he had to pay £14 rent for his house. The Society was begged to make him the usual stipend of £60; but the Society preferred to send him to Delaware, where he stayed a short time. Then he went back to England and missed the dedication services of the new church. It was probably for the new building that the silver chalice was sent by Queen Anne. On October 6, 1714, Mr. Clubb announced his safe return to Philadelphia after a voyage of thirteen weeks and his gratification at his appointment to the combined missions of Oxford and Radnor. At Radnor he was able to preach in Welsh, as Mr. Evans had done. Mr. Humphreys, sometime missionary at Chester, had had temporary charge of Oxford before Mr. Clubb's appointment. On October 12 he wrote to the Society,—

“From a tender and affectionate regard to the welfare of the Church at Oxford, which shall never leave me, though I am removed from it, I must necessarily take notice . . . of one thing which I am afraid will unravel much of the pains taken at that place, which is the obligation upon Mr. Clubb to divide his labors between the Welsh and the Congregation at Oxford Church. Among the latter there has always been a great number of Quakers and Anabaptists but they are well enough secured against these pests. The danger I am apprehensive of arises from the late intrusion of a dissenting Presbyterian Teacher who came into those parts last year, from Wales, and bought a settlement about two miles from the Church. He preaches every Sunday at his own house and is very industrious to prevail with his neighbors to hear him, and many people there are so disposed to variety of doctrine that all the diligence I could exert in warning my people against the schism, and preaching every Sunday in my Church, could not prevent but that some weak people would follow him, especially if they had the pretence of bad weather to palliate their staying from Church; and God knows what the consequence will be of Mr. Clubb's preaching to the Welsh two Sundays in a month.”

But poor Clubb died about Christmas, 1715. His parishioners wrote to the Society that “the great fatigue of riding between the two churches in such dismal ways and weather as we generally have for four months in the winter, soon put a period to his life.” The distance is twenty miles.

After his death Mr. Humphreys again took charge of Oxford, going periodically from Chester. On August 14, 1716, he complained to the Society that Mr. Evans was staying away, and that there were only two missionaries of the Society in the Province, "so that if we did not painfully exert ourselves beyond our proper mission we should soon see this Church in the wilderness, overrun with heresy and schism." But Mr. Evans soon came back, and while he remained in Pennsylvania—about two years—he added the care of Oxford and of Radnor to Philadelphia. The testimony that he was a good and zealous man is abundant. Poor Mr. Humphreys was overworked and perhaps unreasonable in begrudging his brother missionary a little relaxation. In October, 1718, Mr. Humphreys wrote from Chester that he was the only missionary in the Province, and that it was his habit to preach at Radnor, twenty miles away, and at Oxford, twenty-eight miles away from his home, on alternate Thursdays, and that for these services he neither received nor expected compensation.

Ever since Mr. Clubb's death the wardens and vestrymen of Oxford had been begging the Society to send them a regular missionary. In 1716 they wrote that they had about twenty families, and hoped to raise £20 a year and to provide a house and farm for the missionary. On June 25, 1718, Peter Taylor and James Morgan, church wardens, wrote,—

"We know the great want of a good minister by sad experience particularly in our great loss in the decease of our late godly minister, the Revd. Mr. John Clubb who was entirely beloved by this congregation. . . . But since his departure many of his congregation have drawn back, and are strayed away like sheep having no shepherd, some to Quakers, some to Anabaptists, some to the Presbyterians and some to the profane Sabbatarians, to the great grief of us that have an entire love and a great regard for the prosperity of the Protestant religion of the Church of England as by law established. . . . We humbly let their Honors know after this manner we, having no minister on a Sunday, except by chance, agree among ourselves to meet at the House of God every Sunday, where one Nathaniel Walton, our School Master . . .

takes due pains every Lord's Day to read unto us the Holy Scriptures as they are appointed to be read, also the Prayers and Psalms in their order and course, and a Homily or Sermon he reads every Sunday. . . ."

I have nowhere hesitated to quote the acrimonious language used by the early church people about their Quaker and other dissenting neighbors. This is a humble attempt to write a fragment of history, and it is as important to know how men felt and talked about one another as to know what they did. There can be no doubt that the Episcopalians, as a class, heartily disliked the Quakers as a class, partly because their fathers and grandfathers had persecuted the fathers and grandfathers of the Quakers, and partly for the political ideas and practices of the Quakers. I remember, as a child, spelling out one of the very early inscriptions in the church-yard,—an inscription which has become almost illegible, but is preserved in Dr. Buchanan's book. It begins,—

"Here by these lines is testified
No Quaker was she when she died;
So far was she from Quakerism
That she desired to have baptism."

We do not now call those who differ from us in religion, pests; I hope we have become more charitable, not less zealous for the truth.

At last, in 1719, the Reverend Robert Weyman was sent here by the Society, and allowed £60 a year. I hope the people gave him the £20 they talked about, but they complained of poverty and of debts incurred in the building, still unpaid. However, in 1724, they did buy a house, orchard, and sixty-three acres of land, for £130, on what is now called the Bristol Turnpike, about half-way between Holmesburg and Frankford. Mr. Weyman for some years served also the church at Radnor, and extended his mission work as far as the present town of Lancaster, but later the people at Radnor secured a missionary who could preach to them in Welsh, or "in their own British dialect," as Mr.

Weyman expressed it. Mr. Weyman proposed to serve the mission at White Marsh in place of Radnor, White Marsh being at less than half the distance from Oxford. In 1728 he was in London, and wrote to the Society that among other difficulties of the English Church in Pennsylvania was this,—that while she had three missionaries there, the Quakers had two or three hundred speakers or teachers.

In 1731 Mr. Weyman removed to Burlington, and at that time the Reverend Alexander Howie was missionary at White Marsh. In 1733 Mr. Howie was commissioned to care for White Marsh and Oxford combined. In 1734 he reported to the Society:

“The Congregation at Oxford increases so much that there is not room in the church to hold them . . . they design soon to raise a gallery or to enlarge the outward building . . . in these $\frac{3}{4}$ of a year past I have gained over to the Church of England 2 Romans, 3 Independents, 4 Quakers and 3 Anabaptists. . . . But though religion flourishes in Oxford, yet I am very sorry to observe that it greatly decays in White Marsh. The number of sincere Church people does not exceed seven at most.”

On July 21, 1739, Mr. Howie wrote despondently about Oxford also, that those who professed themselves of the Church did not exceed thirty in number, and that he had given up White Marsh. On September 29, 1741, he wrote a very gloomy letter:

“My income last year from Oxford was £16 10. 6. paper money . . . Number of heads of families in Oxford is about 49 . . . those who are really of the Church of England do not at present exceed 25 in number.”

He attributed much of the decay of the parish to the “mischievous doctrines and irregular conduct of that malignant preacher Mr. Whitefield.”

“The parsonage lands and house belonging to Oxford are in ruinous condition . . . so that I have no more benefit from 60 acres of land than if I had none. All that can be said is that I and my family live, rent free, at the hazard of our lives, for the house will neither keep out wet or cold, which last is very extreme in the winter.”

Dr. Buchanan tells us that Mr. Howie went to the West Indies expecting to return, but he remained there.

The Reverend Æneas Ross, who had been an assistant at Christ Church, became the missionary to Oxford and White Marsh in 1743. In 1744 he wrote to the Society that he was living in Abington; that both churches were in a more flourishing state than they had been, and were generally crowded on Sundays. In 1745 he wrote,—

“I am now in great hopes that the rising generation will show themselves as pious members of the Church as their fathers were. The chief of the old standers at Oxford are dead, and there appears in many of the children a great share of devotion, and, please God I live, I expect to see as flourishing a church as they were 25 years ago.”

He said he expected to live at Germantown, which would be only five miles from Oxford and six miles from White Marsh, whereas the Oxford Glebe was thirteen miles from White Marsh.

“The inhabitants of Germantown are Dutch save two or three families of English . . . it lies 6 miles Northwest of Philadelphia, a place of considerable inland trade situated about 3 miles from navigable water for small craft called the River Schuylkill.”

In 1749 he had given up Germantown, and, to save money, was living at the glebe, in spite of its great distance from White Marsh.

The Reverend Hugh Neill was the next missionary in charge. In 1759 pews were put up all over the church, and it was floored for the first time. On May 12, 1760, he wrote to the Society that he was much encouraged, that both churches were crowded, and that he had been asked to preach on Sunday evenings at Germantown. He was then living there, for the glebe house had lately been destroyed by fire.

“The Governor and citizens of Philadelphia were so sensible of the misery my family was reduced to by fire that they subscribed the sum of £255 towards rebuilding the Glebe house . . . The congregation considering the inconvenient situation of the Glebe . . . joined me in

a petition to the Assembly for leave to bring in a bill to sell the old Glebe and purchase a new one, more convenient. . . .”

The old glebe was sold for £252, and a new glebe, of sixty-five acres, where stands the present village of Cedar Grove, was bought in 1761 for £540. On January 10, 1762, he wrote,—

“As our Church of Oxford was too small . . . we set on foot a lottery last Spring for enlarging of it and other uses about the Church.” He hoped “We shall be able to clear for the uses aforesaid between 400 and 500. Thus I hope by the assistance of Divine Providence, notwithstanding the number of dissenters among us we shall continue steady and united as we are at present.”

But the church was not enlarged for more than twenty years; the lottery was a failure. On October 18, 1764, he wrote,—

“I have the pleasure to acquaint the Society that my congregations appear to be more steady than formerly and better fixed in their principles, notwithstanding the powerful efforts that Mr. Whitefield is now making in Philadelphia . . . St. Paul’s the College and Presbyterian Meeting Houses were open to him; but the salutary admonitions of His Grace of Canterbury to the Rector etc. of Christ Church and St. Peter’s has prevented his preaching at this time, in either of them.”

Yet on December 14, 1765, he announced that he had decided to officiate occasionally at St. Paul’s, and in 1766 he removed to Maryland, which the poor missionaries in Pennsylvania seemed to regard as a haven of rest.

I can refer only briefly to the clerical services to this parish of the Reverend Dr. William Smith, from 1766 to 1777, when he was obliged to leave Philadelphia on the approach of the British troops. He was by far the most distinguished man who officiated here, perhaps the most distinguished Episcopal clergyman in America during the eighteenth century. His name is probably known to you all. He made a great success as Provost of the College of Philadelphia, which, according to the late Dr. Stillé, was in many respects quite the equal of Harvard and Yale at the

time of the abrogation of its charter by President Reed, in 1779. Dr. Smith seems to have taken charge of Oxford as a labor of love, to have received no stipend from the Missionary Society, and even to have remitted some of the revenue from the glebe. He informed the Society that he was performing these services to prevent a forfeiture of the new glebe lands under the terms of the Act of Assembly. He was enlightened enough to perceive the evil of the lottery scheme, though such schemes were a matter of course in those days. The people at first seemed well satisfied; they put a new roof on the church in 1770, and in 1772, under Dr. Smith's auspices, was started the new church which became All Saints, Lower Dublin. But he was a man of very positive character, probably made more positive by the exercise of the duties of a college presidency, and by 1771 many of the congregation were asking the Society for the appointment of anybody else, and complaining that people were staying away from church because Smith was offensive to them. But the services of the Venerable Society to the Church in America were nearly at an end. No one else was ever appointed to Oxford. In 1701 the Society had found the Colonies, exclusive of Virginia and Maryland, with five Anglican churches. When the war broke out it retired, leaving two hundred and fifty churches.

And so this sketch must be finished without any more of the letters and reports to the Society,—letters which have seemed to me very interesting and human. Dr. Buchanan tells us that the Church records are scanty and fragmentary; a search for more would seem futile. We do not know what happened during the Revolutionary War, or in precisely what year the nave was extended to its present dimensions; only that it was between 1786 and 1789. Another Dr. William Smith, not related to the provost, was rector in 1785. He was succeeded in 1786 by the Reverend Joseph Pilmore. In that year this church, All Saints, Lower Dublin, and St. Thomas's, White Marsh, were admitted to the

convention. They were made one corporation by an Act of Assembly of 1787. For from some time before this the connection between Oxford and White Marsh was merely nominal.

In 1798 the Reverend John H. Hobart, afterwards Bishop of New York, became the minister of Oxford and of All Saints for about a year. Then, after three years, the Reverend Charles Cotton officiated for a year or two. Then there was another vacancy of five years, services being sometimes supplied by the Reverend Dr. Abercrombie, long assistant at St. Peter's. In 1807 the west door was opened. In 1809 the Reverend James Wiltbank became rector of the united churches of Oxford and Lower Dublin. In 1813 part of the glebe was sold for \$4000, and in 1838 the rest of it was sold for \$3000. I presume the money was spent on the transepts which were built in 1833. The original tower was built by members of the Swift family in 1839, the tower as it is now by Mrs. John Lardner in 1875. The present rectory was built in 1856, the chapel at Crescentville in 1870, and the building in which you sit in 1883.

So much for the buildings. Mr. Wiltbank was succeeded in 1816 by the Reverend George Sheets. All Saints, Trinity, Oxford, and St. Thomas's, White Marsh, were made separate corporations by an Act of Assembly of March 21, 1835. The Reverend F. W. Beasley was made rector of All Saints. Mr. Sheets continued rector of Oxford till 1854, when the Reverend Edward Y. Buchanan, D.D., was elected rector. He served till 1882, and there I end. He was well known to many of you, and it would be impossible for me to do justice to his character or to his services in these closing words. During his rectorship his brother was elected President of the United States, the Civil War was begun and ended, reconstruction was carried out. In those days political excitement caused many bitter feelings and strained many old friendships, but I never heard of an unkind word being spoken by Dr. Buchanan or about him. The parish was harmonious, prosperous, and liberal; twenty-five years

ago scarcely any parish in the diocese gave so much to missions.

And, as Dr. Buchanan has said, the parish had been long a mother of churches, and in her progeny are to be reckoned All Saints, Lower Dublin; St. Luke's, Germantown; Emmanuel, Holmesburg; St. Mark's, Frankford; The Church of Our Saviour, Jenkintown. Of course, I do not mean to say that these churches were built by this parish, but they may be called spiritual offshoots in ground that had been prepared by the clergy of this parish. So perhaps I may be allowed to say it has deserved well of those of its communion. Some of the daughter churches seem now stronger than the mother; the time may come when they may have to help her. The one thing to be regretted in this story, as I have tried to tell it, is, that in days of greater prosperity larger provision was not made for the permanent endowment of a place with such associations, where so many generations of good men have worshipped God and now lie in its quiet church-yard. An endowment fund has been begun; all who desire the preservation of this ancient church either as an historic monument, or as the resting-place of their ancestors, or as a place where good inspirations may be helped by cherished memories, may do something to secure these ends.